

REMARKS

This Response is submitted in reply to the Office Action dated June 21, 2005, and in conjunction with the enclosed Request for Continued Examination. Applicant has amended claims 1-4, 6-17, 21, 22, 24 and 25, and Applicant has added new claims 27-44. Applicant has amended the specification to add a cross reference to related applications. No new matter has been added by these amendments or new claims. Applicant has filed a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) and a Petition for Revival for Unintentional Abandonment with this Response. Please charge Deposit Account No. 02-1818 for all payments due in connection with this Response.

As noted, Applicant has filed an RCE. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the Examiner provide an upcoming Office Action which will “. . . identify any claims which he or she judges, as presently recited, to be allowable and/or . . . suggest any way in which he or she considers that rejected claims may be amended to make them allowable” in accordance with §707.07(d) of the MPEP. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge deposit account 02-1818 for any fees which are due and owing in connection with this Response.

Indication of Allowable Subject Matter / Claim Numbering

The Office Action allowed claim 26. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 26, and its new dependent claims, stand in condition for allowance. The Office Action objected to claims 3, 10 and 13 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but stated these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Objected claims 3, 10 and 13 each depended from rejected claim 1. To advance the prosecution of this application, Applicant has amended such dependent claims as suggested by the Office Action. Specifically, Applicant has added new independent claim 32 to include the elements of independent claim 1 and dependent claim 3; Applicant has added new independent claim 33 to include the elements of independent claim 1 and dependent claim 10; and Applicant has added new independent claim 39 to include the elements of independent claim 1 and dependent claim 13. Accordingly, Applicant submits that new claims 32, 33 and 39, and their dependent claims, are in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Office Action rejected claims 1, 2, 6, 8, 14-19, 21, 22, 24 and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Klemens DE 10055925A1 (“Klemens”). Applicant refers to previously presented claims 1, 2, 6, 8, 14-19, 21, 22, 24 and 25 as “Prior Claims.”

Applicant respectfully disagrees with, and traverses, this rejection because Klemens does not disclose lateral guide elements. For example, lateral guide elements as recited, in part, by Prior Claims 1 and 14, redirect a workpiece, supported by on the roller, which may happen to veer out laterally beyond the ends of the roller. See, specification, page 2, lines 7-10. In contrast, the emphasis of Klemens is drawn to an additional support element that can be used instead of the roller. See, Klemens, Abstract. Furthermore, in Klemens, elements 14, one on either side of the roller, are connected such that the elements do not define a free space therebetween extending beyond a top surface of the roller in the active positions. See, Klemens, Fig. 1. For at least these reasons, Applicant submits that Klemens does not anticipate the Prior Claims or their dependent claims.

Nonetheless, Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 14 for clarity and to advance the prosecution of this application.

Amended independent claim 1 recites, among other elements: “wherein the extension portions define a free space, the free space positioned between the extension portions in the active position and beyond the top surface support, the free space configured to provide access to the top surface support in the active position.” In contrast, the extension portions in Klemens include an elongate element that can be used instead of the roller. See, Klemens, Abstract. Thus, the elongate element located between the extension portions covers the top supporting surface of the roller in the active position and prevents access to the top support surface in the active position. For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that amended independent claim 1, along with its dependent claims, are patentably distinguishable over the cited art of record and in condition for allowance.

Amended independent claim 14 recites, among other elements: “the workpiece-supporting roller having a top support surface configured to support a workpiece in a space and an active position outside the space in which the guide portion extends beyond the axis.” For at least the reasons set forth above with respect to amended independent claim 1, Applicant

respectfully submits that amended independent claim 14, along with its dependent claims, are patentably distinguishable over the cited art of record and in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103


Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Klemens. For at least the reasons set forth above with respect to amended independent claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits that Klemens does not render obvious dependent claim 11, which depends from amended independent claim 1. Accordingly, dependent claim 11 is patentably distinguished over the cited art of record and in condition for allowance.

An earnest endeavor has been made to place this application in condition for allowance, and such allowance is courteously solicited. If the Examiner has any questions related to this Response, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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